

Testimony of

Patricia Vanicky

Educator

Before the

Education Committee

March 15, 2023

I am Patricia Vanicky, and I am a high school art teacher in Connecticut. I am writing in favor of H.B. No. 6884 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

I currently work in Litchfield County as a high school art teacher and my experience so far has been positive. I am providing my testimony based on an experience that was not positive in another county. I don't wish what I went through on any other teacher. I want to be a voice for those enduring an abusive work environment. I want to change the fearful whispers into strong and meaningful actions by standing strong and being a conscientious objector against job expectations that contradict or compromise our professional ethics.

Working conditions have led to teacher job dissatisfaction. The school climates can be a place of micromanaging teachers due to a lack of trust, teacher burnout, and workloads that leave little room for teaching and learning.

With my background and life experience, I can recognize the red flags of an abusive work environment. I'm resisting being labeled as a "burnt-out" teacher when facing demoralization as a professional. I am resisting policies that impede doing good work and strip away the value of teaching. I am resisting unreasonable demands that do not impact teachers and students in positive ways. This demoralization creates a high level of frustration and helplessness. Legislation needs to support and show that society

respects the education profession. I hope my voice can help restore the “moral rewards” of teaching. I support the enhancement of the teaching profession.

Sincerely,

Pat Vanicky

Litchfield County High School Art Teacher